IN THE CLAIMS

1-8. (canceled)

9. (currently amended) A single-stranded polynucleotide comprising at least 13 ~~12~~ contiguous nucleotides of ~~a mutant allele of~~ a human surfactant protein C gene, wherein the at least 13 ~~12~~ contiguous nucleotides comprise a SNP associated with an interstitial lung disease, wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide is suitable for use as a probe to detect the SNP or as a primer to amplify a portion of the gene that comprises the SNP.

10. (original) The single-stranded polynucleotide of claim 9 wherein the SNP is located at a nucleotide position of SEQ ID NO:1 selected from the group consisting of nucleotide positions 49, 114, 219, 243, 246, 324, 332, 335, 359, 369, 402, 443-445, the intronic nucleotide immediately 3′ of nucleotide 460 (460 +1), 521-523, 585, and 588.

11-13. (canceled)

14. (original) The single-stranded polynucleotide of claim 9 which comprises a detectable label.

15. (original) The single-stranded polynucleotide of claim 9 wherein the SNP is at either the 3′ or the 5′ end of the polynucleotide.

16. (original) The single-stranded polynucleotide of claim 9 which is bound to a solid support.

17. (currently amended) A kit, comprising:

a ~~reagent for detecting a SNP in a mutant allele~~ single-stranded polynucleotide comprising at least 13 contiguous nucleotides of a human surfactant protein C gene, wherein the at least 13 contiguous nucleotides comprise a SNP, wherein the SNP is associated with an interstitial lung disease, and wherein the single-stranded

polynucleotide is suitable for use as a probe to detect the SNP or as a primer to amplify a portion of the gene that comprises the SNP; and

instructions for a method of screening an individual for a predisposition to developing the interstitial lung disease, comprising the step of:

assaying a biological sample obtained from the individual to determine if an allele of the individual's surfactant protein C gene comprises the SNP ~~detecting the SNP~~.

18. (canceled)

19. (canceled)

20. (original) The kit of claim 17 wherein the SNP is located at a nucleotide position of SEQ ID NO:1 selected from the group consisting of nucleotide positions 49, 114, 219, 243, 246, 324, 332, 335, 359, 369, 402, 443-445, the intronic nucleotide immediately 3′ of nucleotide 460 (460 +1), 521-523, 585, and 588.

21-58. (canceled)

59. (new) A kit, comprising:

a single-stranded polynucleotide comprising at least 13 contiguous nucleotides of a human surfactant protein C gene, wherein the at least 13 contiguous nucleotides comprise a SNP, wherein the SNP is associated with an interstitial lung disease, and wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide is suitable for use as a probe to detect the SNP or as a primer to amplify a portion of the gene that comprises the SNP; and

instructions for a method to aid in diagnosing an individual as having the interstitial lung disease, comprising the step of:

assaying a biological sample obtained from the individual to determine if an allele of the individual's surfactant protein C gene comprises the SNP.

60. (new) The kit of claim 59 wherein the SNP is located at a nucleotide position of SEQ ID NO:1 selected from the group consisting of nucleotide positions 49, 114, 219, 243, 246, 324, 332, 335, 359, 369, 402, 443-445, the intronic nucleotide immediately 3′ of nucleotide 460 (460 +1), 521-523, 585, and 588.

61. (new) A kit, comprising:

a single-stranded polynucleotide comprising at least 13 contiguous nucleotides of a human surfactant protein C gene, wherein the at least 13 contiguous nucleotides comprise a SNP, wherein the SNP is associated with an interstitial lung disease, and wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide is suitable for use as a probe to detect the SNP or as a primer to amplify a portion of the gene that comprises the SNP; and

instructions for a method of screening an individual having the interstitial lung disease to determine whether the individual is likely to respond to a therapeutic intervention, comprising the step of:

assaying a biological sample obtained from the individual to determine whether both alleles of the individual's surfactant protein C gene comprise the SNP.

62. (new) The kit of claim 61 wherein the SNP is located at a nucleotide position of SEQ ID NO:1 selected from the group consisting of nucleotide positions 49, 114, 219, 243, 246, 324, 332, 335, 359, 369, 402, 443-445, the intronic nucleotide immediately 3′ of nucleotide 460 (460 +1), 521-523, 585, and 588.

63. (new) The single-stranded polynucleotide of claim 9 that comprises at least 14 contiguous nucleotides.

64. (new) The single-stranded polynucleotide of claim 9 that comprises at least 15 contiguous nucleotides.

65. (new) The single-stranded polynucleotide of claim 9 that comprises at least 20 contiguous nucleotides.

66. (new) The single-stranded polynucleotide of claim 9 that comprises at least 25 contiguous nucleotides.

67. (new) The single-stranded polynucleotide of claim 9 that comprises at least 50 contiguous nucleotides.

68. (new) The kit of claim 17 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 14 contiguous nucleotides.

69. (new) The kit of claim 17 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 15 contiguous nucleotides.

70. (new) The kit of claim 17 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 20 contiguous nucleotides.

71. (new) The kit of claim 17 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 25 contiguous nucleotides.

72. (new) The kit of claim 17 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 50 contiguous nucleotides.

73. (new) The kit of claim 59 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 14 contiguous nucleotides.

74. (new) The kit of claim 59 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 15 contiguous nucleotides.

75. (new) The kit of claim 59 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 20 contiguous nucleotides.

76. (new) The kit of claim 59 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 25 contiguous nucleotides.

77. (new) The kit of claim 59 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 50 contiguous nucleotides.

78. (new) The kit of claim 61 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 14 contiguous nucleotides.

79. (new) The kit of claim 61 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 15 contiguous nucleotides.

80. (new) The kit of claim 61 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 20 contiguous nucleotides.

81. (new) The kit of claim 61 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 25 contiguous nucleotides.

82. (new) The kit of claim 61 wherein the single-stranded polynucleotide comprises at least 50 contiguous nucleotides.